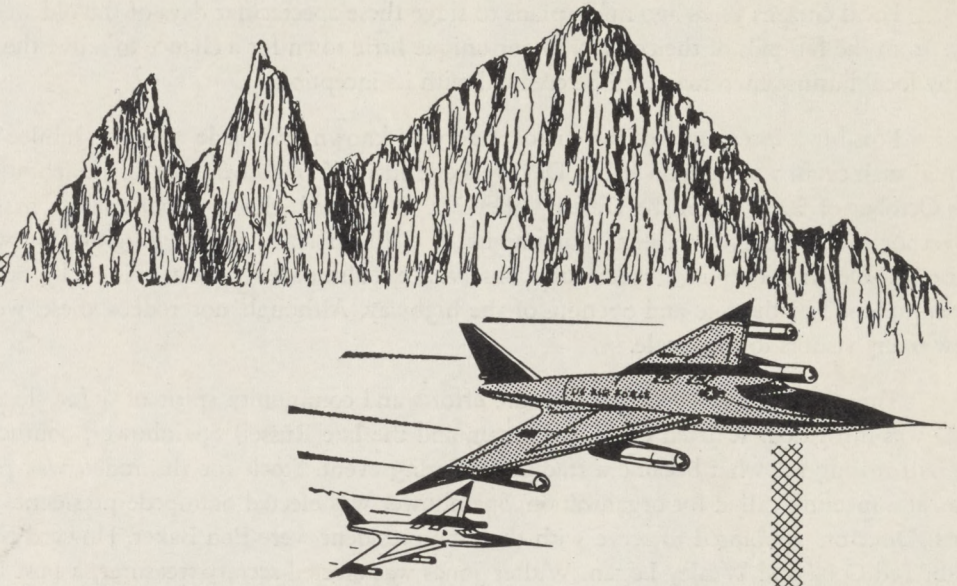

SOUVENIR of LONE PINE STAMPEDE 1963

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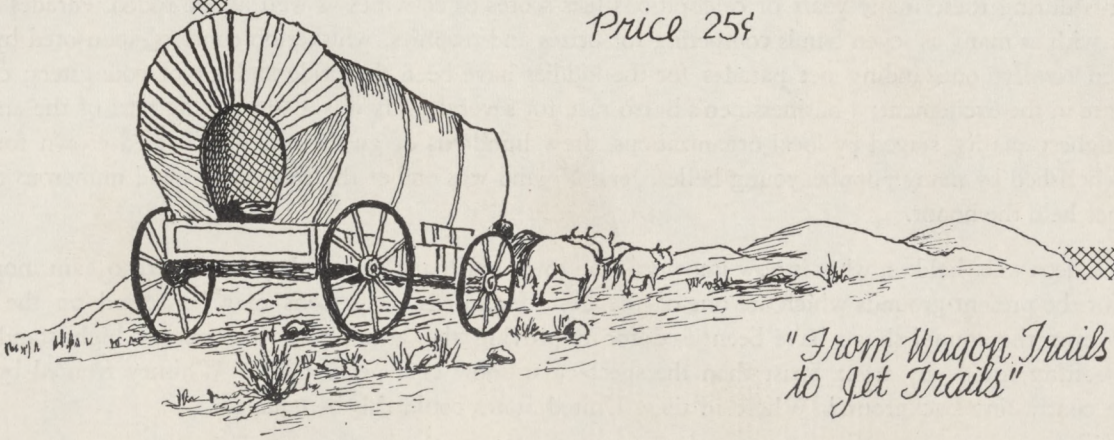

"From Wagon Trails to Jet Trails"

THE HISTORY OF THE LONE PINE STAMPEDE

Local citizens years ago made plans to stage these spectacular days of the old west and bring visitors and champion cowboys from the far ends of the country to our unique little town for a chance to relive the wild west in a gala weekend celebration. Many local businessmen may well be credited with its inception.

Possibly a forerunner of the current and well known Stampede were the Jubilee celebrations of the early 30's, the fourth annual such event was held on Labor Day weekend in 1935. Another such big celebration was the Wedding of the Waters in late October of 1937 when the Death Valley-Mt. Whitney highway program saw many honored notables present, including Governor Merriam. This pageant was unique in California and was highlighted by water brought from Tulainyo Lake and carried to Death Valley in a spectacular observance, culminated with a fireball by beacon fires from Mt. Whitney signaling the completion of the fete and opening of the highway. Although not rodeos these were fine community performances, and drew many visitors to the locale.

Then in April of 1941, through the efforts and community spirit of a few local citizens, the first big show of rodeo fame was instigated. Wilfred Cline, stockman, and the late Russell Spainhower, Southern Inyo rancher and cattleman, started the ball rolling for what became a traditional spring event. Stock for the rodeo was provided by Cline and by a unanimous vote, at a meeting called for organization, Spainhower was elected Stampede president, a position he held for nine consecutive years. Directors appointed to serve with the new president were Ben Baker, Howard Miller, Fred Reynolds, Otto "Slim" Honerlah, Ted Cook and Wesley Logan. Walter Jones was elected sectary-treasurer, a post he filled continuously for 21 years. Announcer for this first rodeo was Jack Hopkins, this spot is still occupied by him and he continues to cover the shows in paramount form. Ben Baker continues to be a most active member of the committee and "Slim" Honerlah, until this year, has faithfully served as a committee member.

After eight years of fine performances the Stampede became an incorporated organization and since then has been an RCA show of top caliber. The first such show boasted prize money of $850 plus entry fees and during the years of growing popularity the last purses totaled $1800 plus entry fees, making prizes running close to $4000.

As the Stampede continued to grow and become more widely known amongst the professionals such top-notch names in the rodeo world as Casey Tibbs, Rex Connley, Bill Linderman, Ross Dollarhide, Chuck Shepard, Don Adams, Lawson Fore, Bill Hogue, Enoch Walker, famed Canadian cowboy, appeared on the rodeo program. One of our own young cowboys that grew up in this community, Wayne Cline, is now in good money in rodeo circles. Among other notables who have added much to the local shows with their stellar performances have been Joaquin Sanchez, Fes Reynolds and Wes Curtis.

Let us not forget that along with these professionals, our local businessmen have contributed much in making these shows the pride of the community. Following the nine year term of Russell Spainhower as president, by-laws were amended to read a one year term for each president and beginning in 1951 the following citizens served well as leaders of the Stampede Inc.: Jack Hopkins, Ben Baker, Fred Reynolds, Tom Noland, Norvil Aigner, Henry Olivas, Lefty Edmonston, C. M. Richards, Bob Rutherford, Gwen Gardner, Bud Slater and Joe Bonham. Other names, to mention a few, who have played major roles in the successful celebrations are Frank Chrysler, Ted Cook, John Morris and Howard Miller.

Calendar of events during these many years of celebrations lists scores of activities as well as the rodeo. Parades have been of first class quality with as many as seven bands competing for prizes and trophies; whiskerino contests, sponsored by the Lions Club, brought keen rivalry; outstanding pet parades for the kiddies have been the pride and joy of youngsters; carnivals too came in for a share in the excitement; a businessmen's burro race for several years was a stimulating part of the annual weekend; barbecues of highest quality, staged by local organizations, drew hundreds of guests and the coveted crown for the "Stampede Queen" was cherished by many popular young belles. Jean Noland was one of the first queens and numerous other young teenagers have since held the honor.

In the beginning rodeos were held on what is now known as the town ball park and as they continued to gain momentum plans materialized for the present grounds which are one of the best. Hundreds of persons may be seated on the fine grandstands, and monies from the annual shows have been used for improving the grounds to the present high standards. What more picturesque setting could any arena boast than the spectacular snow clad peaks of Mt. Whitney fronted by the pictorial Alabamas for a contrasting background. Where in these United States could this be equaled?

Credits for Stampede book—PICTURES, Eastern California Museum; U. S. Forest Service; Phillips Camera Shop, Bishop; ARTWORK, Loren Ray; ADVERTISING, Virginia Sutherlin; PRINTING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, Chalfant Press; And to all the advertisers who have made this book possible we extend thanks—THE STAMPEDE COMMITTEE.

Barbara Getty, right, assumes role of Queen for the 1963 Lone Pine Stampede from the 1962 Queen Janet Barnes.

Keeler stage leaving for Mojave. It took three days to make the trip. Picture by Geo. Cook, Lone Pine 1908.

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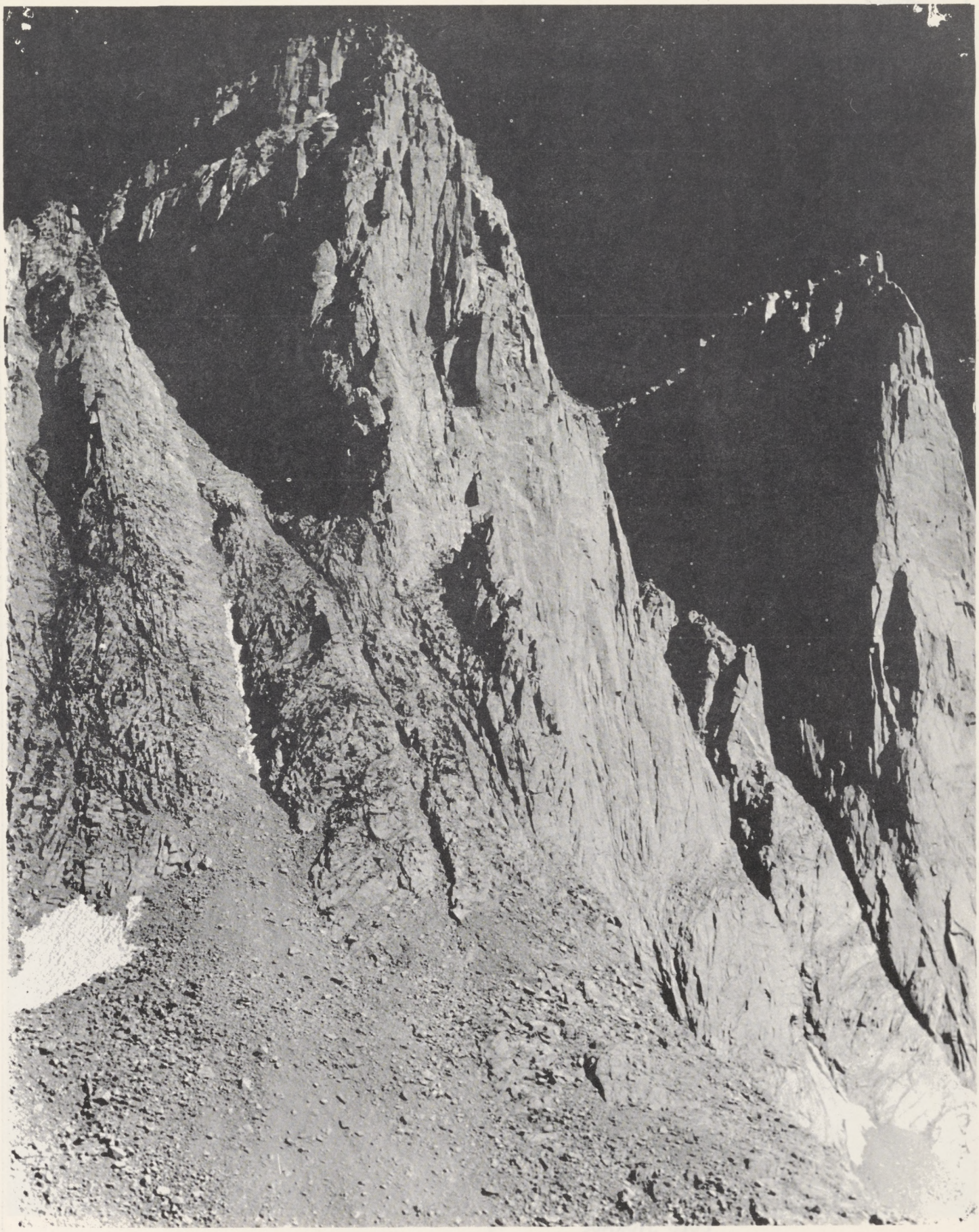

Pinnacles just south of Mt. Whitney.

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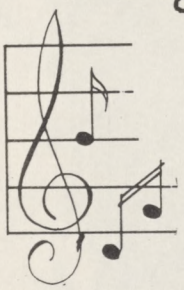

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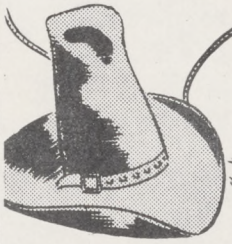

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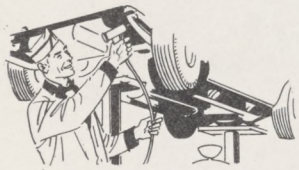
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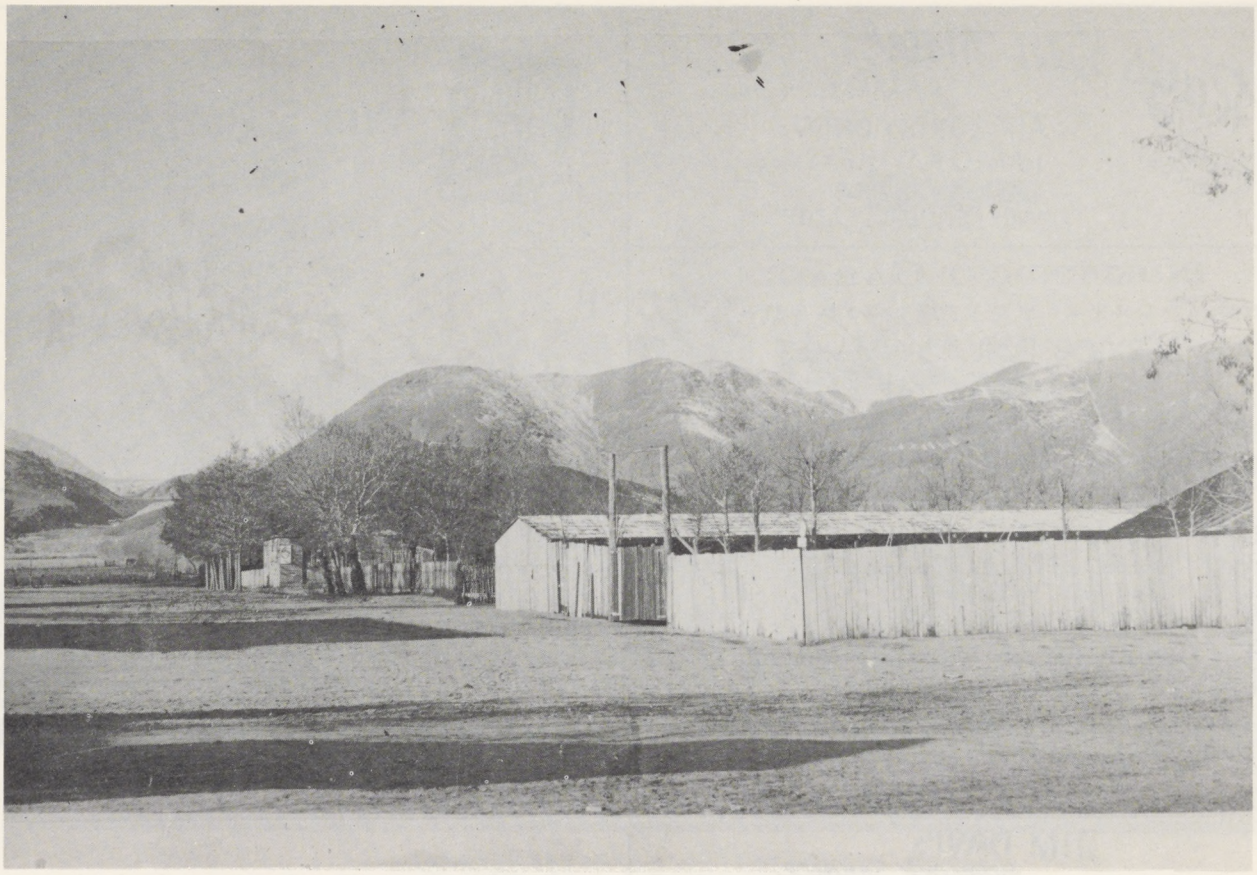

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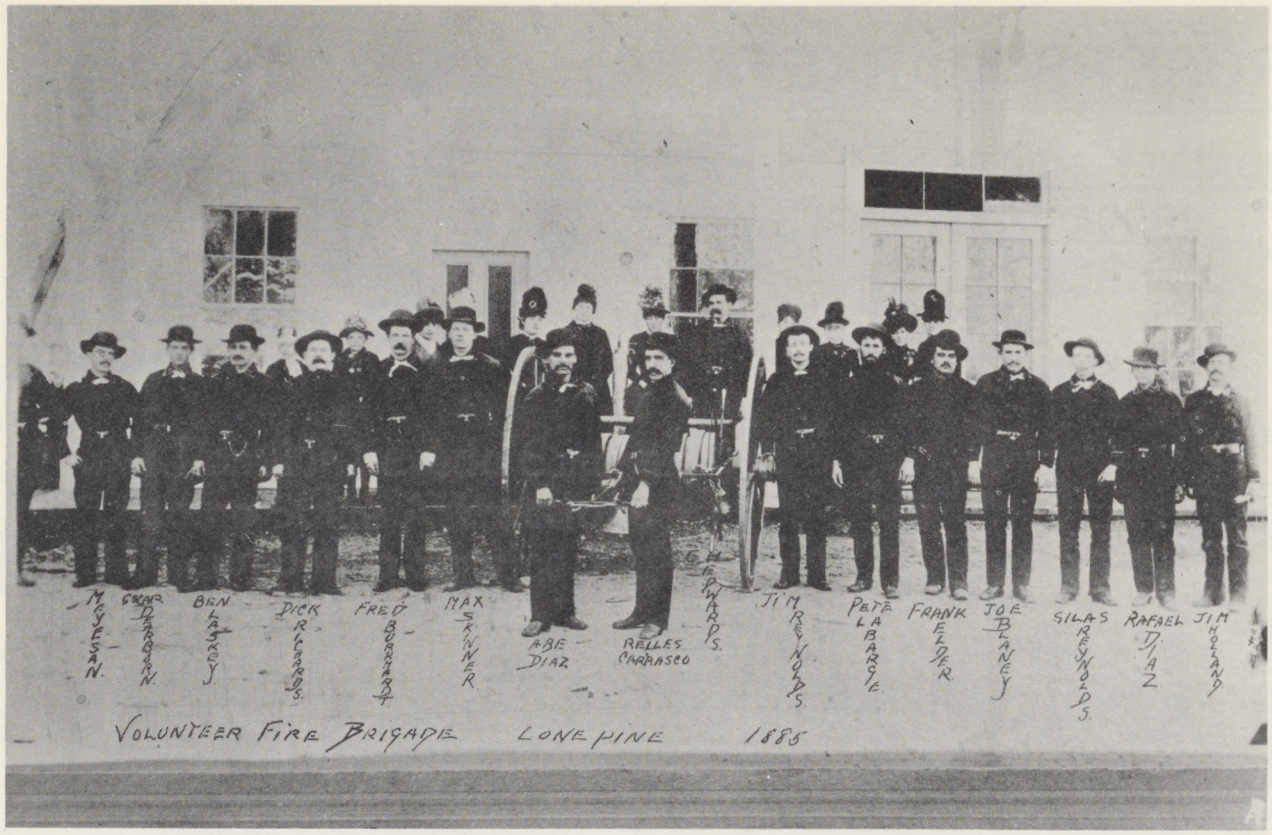
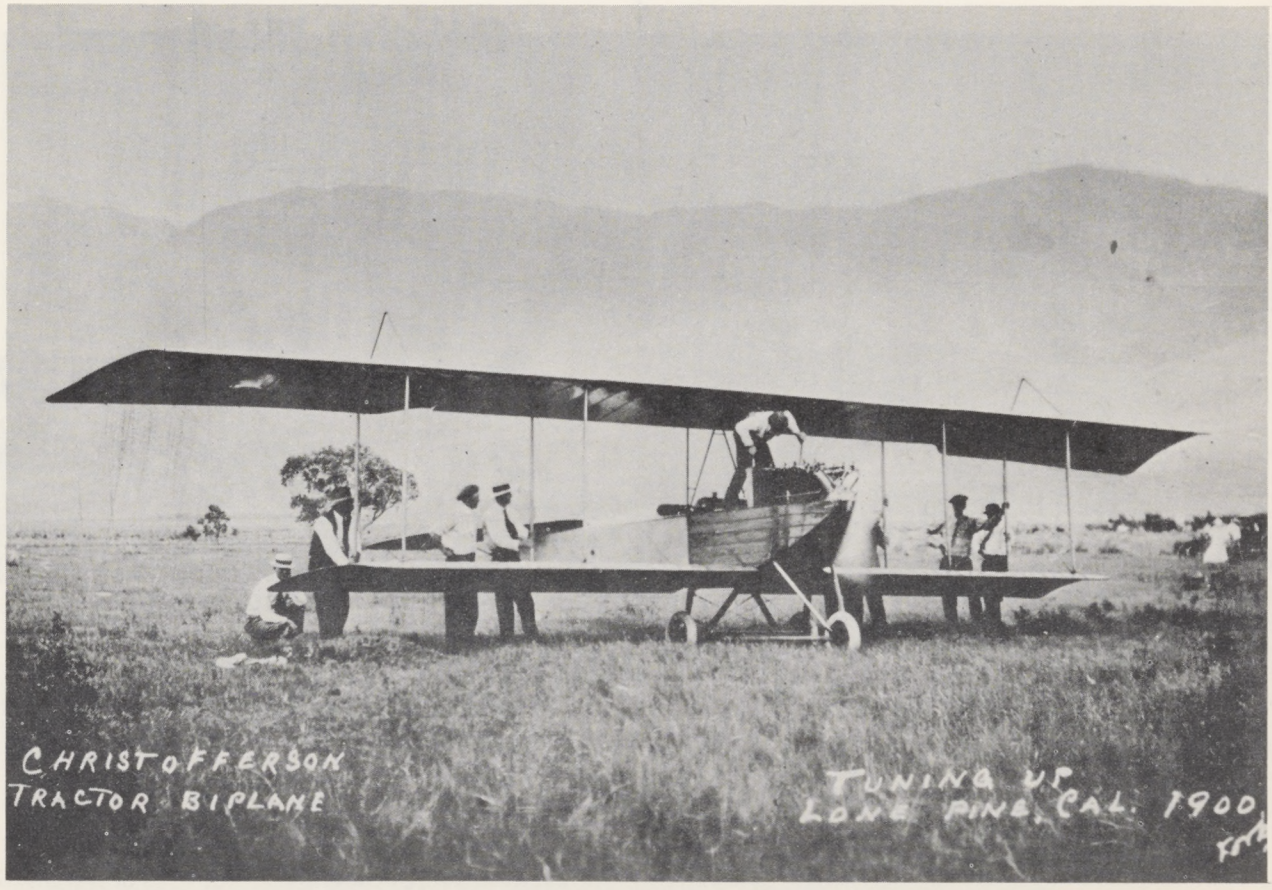


Lone Pine Volunteer Fire Brigade 1885



First airplane flight over Mt. Whitney. Lottie Arcularius collection, Bishop.

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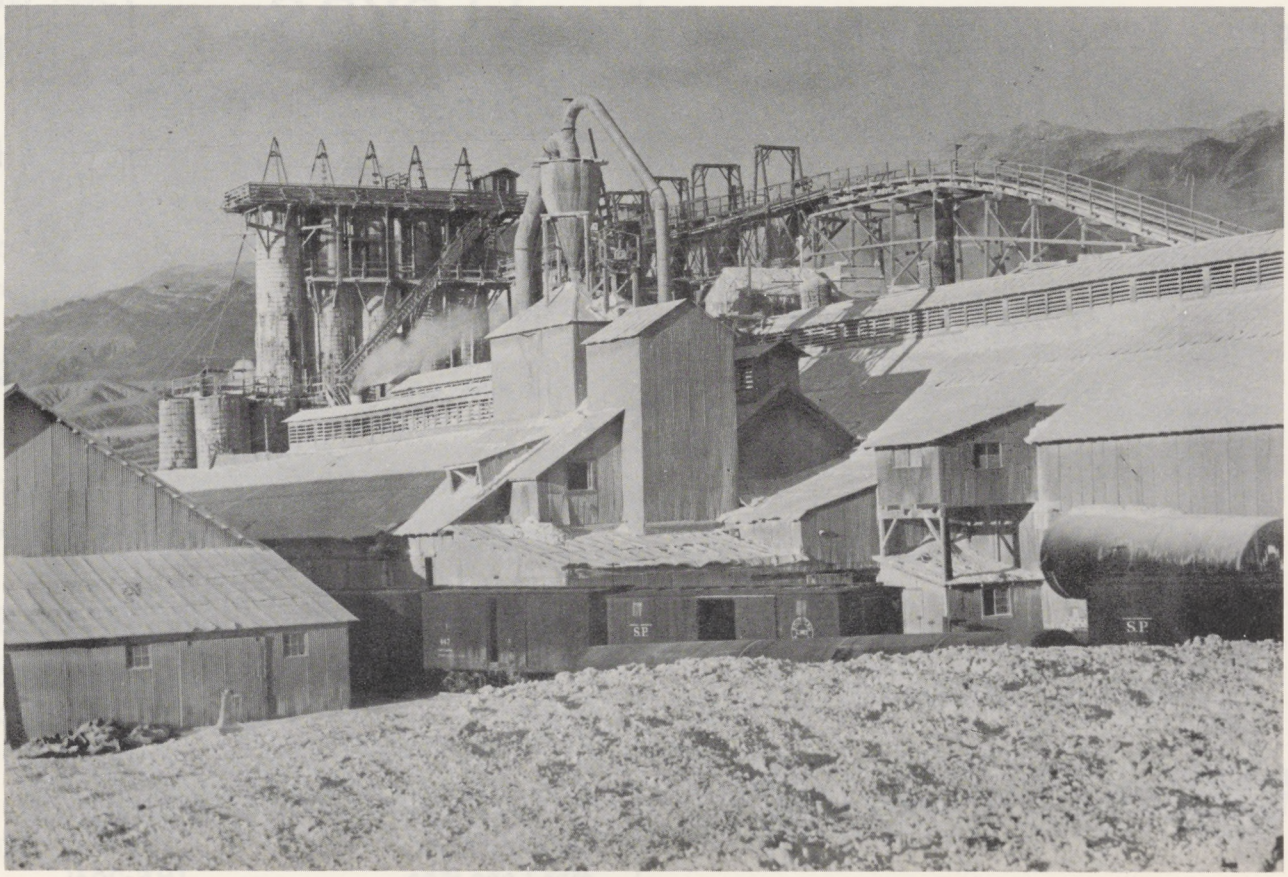

Natural Soda Products Plant, now dismantled.—Phillips Camera Photo.

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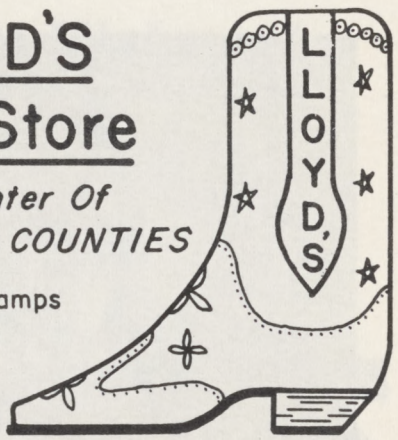

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Lone Pine Main St., looking north. Note stream running across street.

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Padre Crowley points out to Dr. H. W. Deuker the inscription on the gourd which carried water from Lake Tulaingo to Bad Water, Death Valley, at "Wedding of the Waters" celebration.—Phillips Camera Photo.

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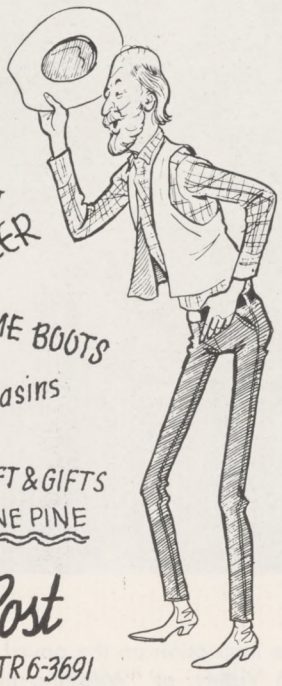

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The old Begole building, now Shultz building, recently occupied by Dr. Don Christenson. Chas. Begole was one of the first Lone Pine settlers and helped lay out the townsite.

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Lone Pine celebrates "Wedding of the Waters" 1938.—Phillips Camera Photo.

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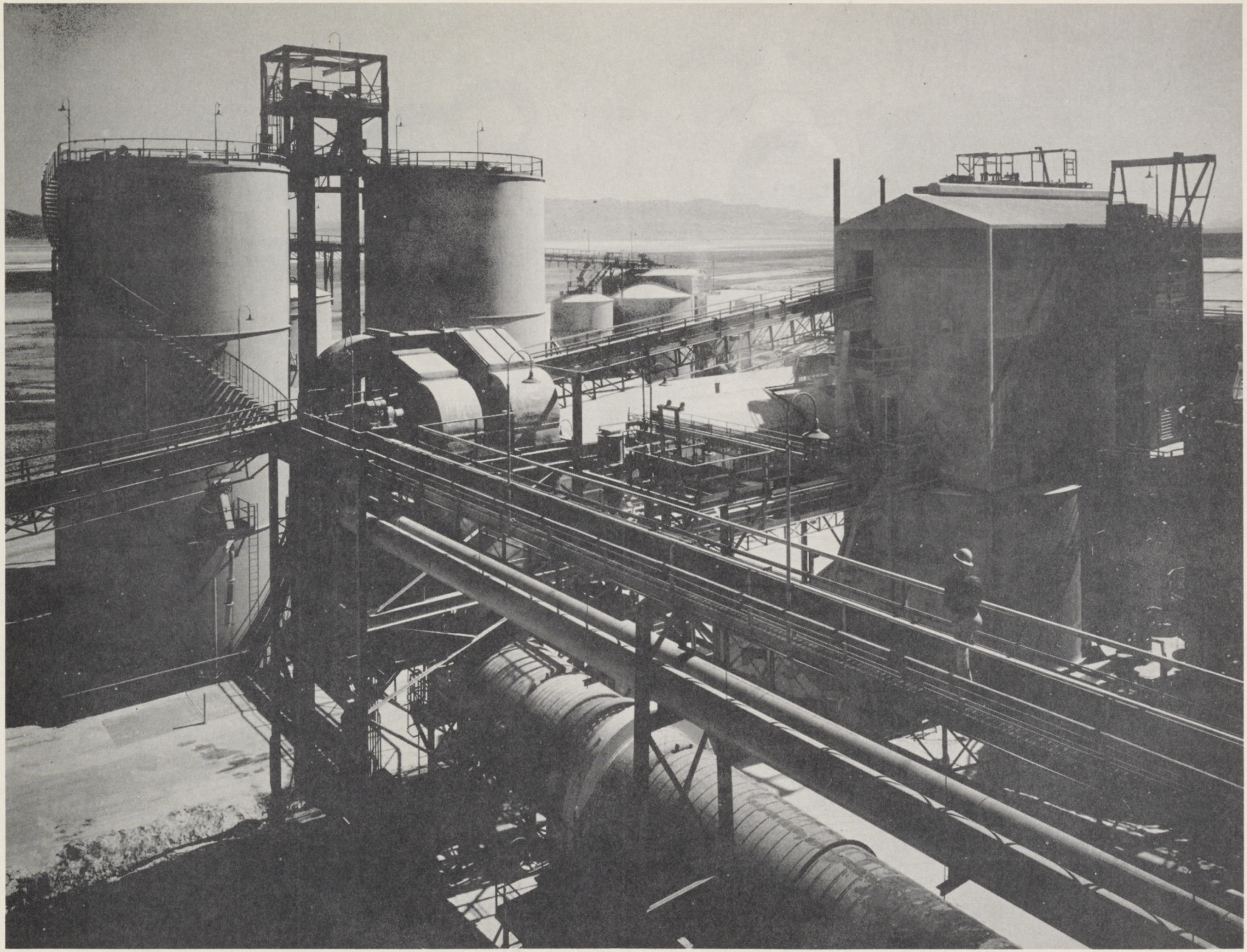

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One of the most photographed houses outside of the Hollywood studios is this old home on the Anchor Ranch, south of Lone Pine.—Phillips Camera Photo.

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Campfire scene at Hitchcock Lakes during "Wedding of the Waters" celebration. Left to right: **Bob Crosby, Ted Cook, Father John J. Crowley, Jack Hopkins and Allan Ramsey.** Phillips Camera Photo.

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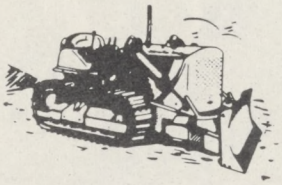

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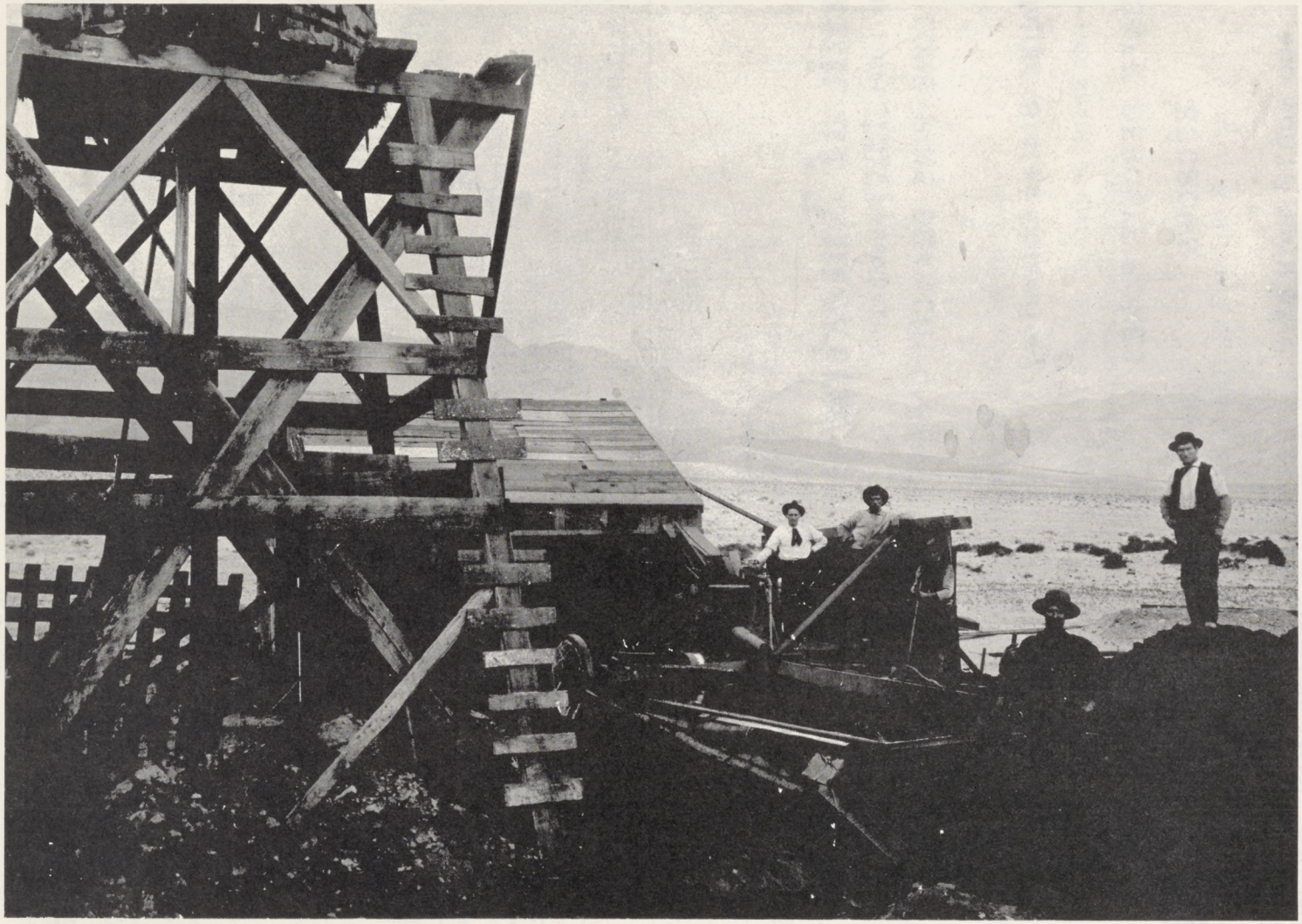

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